

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 8-17, 19 and 21 are active in the case.

Accompanying the response is a Declaration Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.132 in which superior results are shown in drawability and grain index for steel sheets having the composition of the present claims with nitrogen $< 0.006\%$, as compared to steel sheets having a composition within the range of the present claims with the exception that nitrogen is $> 0.006\%$.

Specifically, Specimen A with nitrogen = 0.0023; R 2116A and R2115A having nitrogen = 0.0035 are within the limits of the claims that nitrogen $< 0.006\%$ are compared to Specimens B and C which have nitrogen = 0.0065 and 0.0081, respectively, outside the limit of nitrogen in the claims. Specimen A and inventive examples R2116A and R2115A, having nitrogen $< 0.006\%$ have superior drawability and exhibit superior grain index, when annealed at 670°C for 30 seconds, i.e., r mean = 1.8 and $\Delta C = 0.05$ along with a grain index of 10.7 for Specimen A; r mean = 1.62 and $\Delta C = 0.08$ along with a grain index of 10.5 for R2116A and r mean 1.63 and $\Delta C = 0.12$ along with a grain index of 10.5 for R2115A.

Comparative Specimens B and C, which have a composition in which nitrogen is $> 0.006\%$, i.e., Specimen B has nitrogen = 0.0065% and Specimen C has nitrogen = 0.0081%. Specimens B and C exhibit poor drawability with r mean < 1.6 and ΔC not being close to 0 along with the fact that the compositions are not fully recrystallized at 670°C . Therefore, grain index cannot be accurately measured, which demonstrates unsatisfactory results for steel sheets of the comparative Specimens.

Sample 3 of EP0556834A2 has nitrogen = 0.009% (see Table 2 on page 9 of the reference). Therefore, in accordance with the test results for Specimens B and C above, the steel sheet of sample 3 would not be fully recrystallized at 670°C after only 10 seconds and the drawability was poor with an r mean = 1.5 and $\Delta C = 0.2$ (see Table 3 on page 10). Since

it is stated in the Declaration that the results of the tests on Specimen A, R2116A and R2115A are representative of the results to be obtained for compositions containing nitrogen throughout the range $< 0.006\%$, it can be seen that the test results demonstrate that steel sheet from a steel composition containing nitrogen $< 0.006\%$ can be annealed at a lower temperature (670°C) and produce steel sheet having superior drawability characteristics and a grain index > 10 , as compared to steel sheet from steel compositions with nitrogen $> 0.006\%$, which cannot be fully recrystallized at 670°C and produces steel sheet with poor drawability and having an unsatisfactory grain index.

It is submitted that the results of the Declaration Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.132 distinguish the claims over EP0556834A2 and the allowance of Claims 8-17, 19 and 21 is respectfully requested.

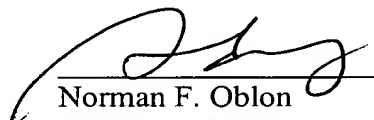
Respectfully submitted,

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